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December 9, 1977

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Dr. G. Esler Inskeep
Assistant Patent Officer
Philip Morris Incorporated
Research Center, P.O. Box 26583
Richmond, Virginia 23261

Re: "Continuous Process for Expanding
Tobacco"
Our File 582-847, PM 697

Dear Dr. Inskeep:

Enclosed is a draft application covering the subject matter of the disclosures entitled "Continuous Processes for Tobacco Expansion". This draft includes the information in the disclosures enclosed with your letters of November 24, 1975 and April 8, 1976, as well as the material set forth in Philip Morris Report 76-132 which you forwarded on October 20, 1977.

Substantially all of the information in the draft is derived directly from the above-identified materials. However, certain details of the process are based upon the parameters suggested in U.S. Patent No. 3,771,533 to Armstrong et al. Therefore, when the inventors review the application, please have them verify the accuracy of the description of the details of the process such as the amounts of impregnants and means of expansion.

With respect to the novelty of the process, please note the discussion of British Patent No. 1,331,640 on page 2 of the draft. Also note that there is a reference to a South African Patent Application No. 70/8291 in the disclosure forwarded on November 24, 1975. We do not have a copy of this application and therefore have not mentioned it in the background of the invention. If you have a copy of this application, please forward a copy to us so that the background of

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Dr. G. Esler Inskeep

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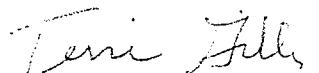
December 9, 1977

the invention can be modified to incorporate a discussion of this application. Also suggestions regarding any further bases for distinguishing the present process, particularly when ammonium carbamate is used, and the above patent and application, would be appreciated.

In addition to the above-mentioned specific points, if you or the inventors have any information concerning the invention which has not been included in this draft application or believe that any of the details with respect to the description of the practice of the invention should be further clarified, your comments would be appreciated. Finally, please feel free to make any other comment, correction or suggestion which you or the inventors feel is appropriate.

If there is any aspect of the instant application which can better be clarified through discussion, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Theresa M. Gillis

TMG:lij
Enclosure

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